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SUMMER 2009 • NUMBER 9

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SUMMER 2009 ISSUE 9 WWW.SFBG.COM



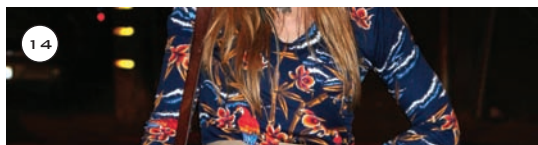
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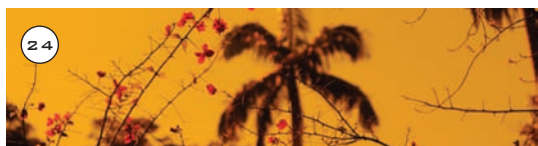
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HIGH AND OUTSIDE

This is our ninth issue of Scene — and we're done with all the innings, so we're popping our flies for scenemakers who take it outside, literally and symbolically. As the weather actually, hopefully, heats up so do the Bay's banging parties, music, and fashionable expressions. It's sexy out there, and we urge you to round all the beautiful bases before you make that home run at dawn. Baseball metaphors! Hot.

Marke B., Scene Editor

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STRANGE BREWS

Swinging wild with some very unusual cocktails

By Molly Freedenberg :: Photos by Melissa Barnes

If drinking were dating, I'd be in a relationship rut. After playing the field in my youth, I've settled happily with cheap beer, Irish whiskey, and the occasional caffeinated cocktail. We're comfortable. We're committed. We're perfectly ... boring. It recently dawned on me that woman cannot live on \$2 tall boys and easily filled flasks alone. Especially in a town that treats cocktails like cuisine and touts the weird and wacky Fernet as its unofficial macot. Where better to experiment, in drinking as in dating? One must challenge oneself. Grow. Evolve.

It was time to date around.

Not one to take a personal challenge lightly, I decided to up the ante by trying as many challenging drinks as I could in three days — from fancy herbal concoctions made with trendy ingredients to oddly-named specialties combining classic components in new ways. Call it a martini marathon. A kamikaze cocktail run. Speed-dating for sauce. Here are my “full swill ahead” results.

SOLID CONTENDERS

I chose many of the bars I visited based on their reputation for innovative cocktails that actually taste good, so it was no wonder so many drinks were decent — if not quite the cocktail of my dreams. (After all, one girl's Sour Frog is another's Prince Pisco.) Two examples were at **Rye** (688 Geary, SF; 415-474-4448, ryesf.com): Elementary, My Dear Watsonville, a mix of cachaca, lemon, raspberry, and ancho chili that was on special; and the Pete and Ginger, made with blended whiskey, lemon juice, and

ginger syrup served in a glass washed with single malt scotch. Both were tasty, and eased my disappointment over missing out on the famed Yellow Bicycle (as Rye was out of its main ingredient — you guessed it — Domaine de Canton). The former would have been even better with a bit more chili, though, and the latter was still too acidic, though the ginger and scotch balanced each other nicely. Perhaps I also would have been more impressed if the service hadn't been so slow.

At **Beretta** (1199 Valencia, SF; 415-695-1199, www.berettasf.com), I could find fault with neither the service nor the sauce. My Penicillin #2, an off-menu item made with mescal, ginger, honey, and lemon juice, had a pleasantly smoky aroma and taste, like a campfire margarita. My favorite, though, was the Rattlesnake, a smooth cocktail topped with frothy egg whites whose coffee flavor evolved from fruity to sweet to bitter. And delightfully, all could hold their own paired with food, as could the whiskey-based Waldorf at **Farallon** (450 Post #4, SF; 415-956-6969, www.farallonrestaurant.com) and the feisty rhubarb cocktail at **Aziza** (5800 Geary, SF; 415-752-2222, www.aziza-sf.com), though I'd only recommend the rhubarb cocktail to those who are already fans of the distinctive vegetable it's built around.

BOOKS BY THEIR COVERS

Of all the drinks I tried, the biggest surprise was the banana margarita at **Little Baobab** (3388 19th St, SF; 415-643-3558,

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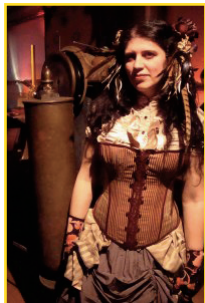
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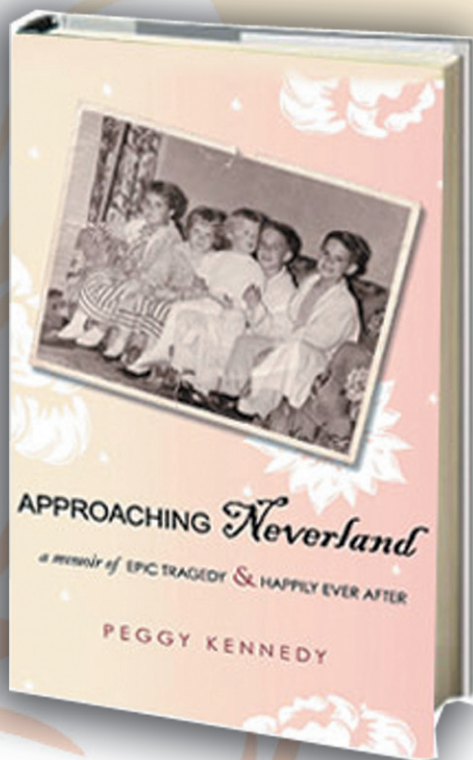


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COCKTAILS CONT. >>

www.bissapbab.com). Because I consider the tropical phallus more of a starch than a fruit, this option sounded about as appetizing as a potato daiquiri. But it turned out to be pleasantly ... well, pleasant. With Torani syrup and a touch of ginger (trendy!) added to the usual mix, the result was, to quote a friend, “weird as fuck, but kinda good.” I doubt it’ll usurp the place of my favorite menu offering — the Fleur, a mixture of whiskey, tamarind, and ginger that goes down easy — but I wouldn’t refuse it if someone bought it for me. (Cute bartender with the piercings and striped eyebrows, I’m talking to you.)

On the other hand, the disgustingly named Sweet Booger at **Nag’s Head** (5346 Geary, SF; 415-387-9510) delivered as promised. A kind of sorority sister to **Butter’s** (354 11th St., SF; 415-863-5964, www.smoothasbutter.com) fratty Whitetrash Driver (Sunny-D and vodka, natch), the Apple Pucker’s and who-cares-what-else concoction was so tart and cloying — a liquefied Jolly Rancher — I couldn’t even finish it. Like an ill-advised one-night stand, I might try this again under peer pressure or when already drunk, but I’d probably regret it in the morning. To her credit, the bartender at this delightfully quirky dive seemed to suggest, by the glint in her eye and smirk on her lips, that the Booger exists more for novelty than consumption. The rest of the clientele sipped smartly on draft beer or whiskey on the rocks.

BLIND DATE

Research is good, but sometimes serendipity can be better. I chose two trusted yentas, **Alembic** (1725 Haight, SF; 415-666-0822, www.alembicbar.com) and **Gitane** (6 Claude Ln, SF; 415-695-6686, www.gitanerestaurant.com) to set me up with their weirdest and wildest, and I wasn’t disappointed. The bartender at Alembic improvised a concoction made with Genevieve Gin (distilled from grain mash at Anchor Brewery in Potrero Hill) that, with yellow chartreuse and absinthe, struck a delightfully summery note. Though she couldn’t recreate this exact mixture, I’m sure whatever the mixologists at this Haight Street oasis come up with will satisfy just as well. Same goes for the magicians at

Claude Lane’s gypsy bar, **Gitane**, where bartenders poured two fantastic cocktails so new they aren’t even named yet. Ask for the first, featuring Bols Genever (a gin that, weirdly, acts like a whiskey), two kinds of bitters, and a hint of absinthe, by the name of its creator, Carlos. The other? Tentatively deemed Night of the Iguana, it’s so smooth and delicious — despite its 2 ounces of tequila (light and dark), port, ginger beer, and mint — that it’s dangerous. (But who doesn’t like a bad boy?)

LONG-TERM POTENTIAL

It takes a lot to overcome the let-down of slow service, but **Absinthe** (398 Hayes, SF; 415-551-1590, www.absinthe.com) managed to make up for the absurd wait with the Highland Picnic, a scotch concoction my friend called “the wine of cocktails,” thanks to its complexity. Competing neck-and-neck with the Picnic was the Louisiana Purchase at **Town Hall** (342 Howard, SF; 415-908-3900, www.townhallsf.com), whose ginger liquor, bitters, and lemon juice and cayenne-sugared rim would be reason enough for me to return to the SoMa eatery.

But the best Dates of the Dare award go, without question, to two specialties at **Dosa** on Fillmore (1700 Fillmore, SF; 415-441-3672, dosasf.com). The Laughing Lassi, an alcoholic twist on the traditional yogurt drink, left a bit (OK, a lot) to be desired. But the Bengali Gimlet was delightful, with curry nectar perfectly balancing the bite of Tanqueray Rangpur Gin. The aromatic yellow cocktail might have been my all-around favorite if I hadn’t tried the Bloody Mary (Curry). The curry worked so melodiously with the drink’s usual ingredients, it was hard to imagine it’s not a part of the classic recipe. Dubbed by my friend as a Bloody Mary you don’t have to be hung over to drink, I’d go even further: this is one cocktail I could wake up to every morning.

Lucky for PBR, though, my bank account can’t support such a relationship right now. And my taste buds — and stomach lining — can’t handle all this philandering. Plus, a few days away has made me appreciate my safe, cozy drinking routine again. But if I ever need a bit more excitement in my long-term beverage-ness, I know exactly what Mary can put the spice back in my relationship. **SFBG**





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JAH WARRIOR SHELTER HI FI LIGHTS UP

INTERVIEW: MARKE B.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KEENEY AND LAW

Reggae: still fresh? Yes. A lot of stereotypes have attached themselves to reggae over the years, not all of them good or true. But this is the Bay, a blazing nexus for the sound, and a spirit of liveliness and innovation can always be found here — especially if members of the classic Jah Warrior Shelter Hi Fi sound system are twisting it. Since 1988, the crew has been rocksteady on the roots scene — and hardly an evening goes by that you won't find Rocker T, Jah Yzer, I-vier, or Irie Dole lighting up the decks or the mic with his unique approach somewhere. Serious with that: besides Jah Warrior Shelter's weekly Bless Up joint at Milk every Tuesday (celebrating its five-year anniversary July 14) and Toppa Top blast at Club Six every Thursday night, the crew brings the fire to EndUp, Laszlo, Luka's, Pier 23, Oasis, Jelly's ... I-Vier co-helms KPFA's Reggae Express show with Spliff Skankin, the sound system has snagged numerous soundclash competition titles, and Jah Warrior Shelter mixtapes flow like rolling verbiage throughout the scene. Check out their mad productivity at www.jahwarriorshelter.com.

SFBG Why do you think reggae has found such a home here?

Irie Dole San Francisco has always been a hub for reggae music and performers. The hippie movement's peace and love vibration naturally attracted Rastas — foundation artists Jacob Miller and Hugh Mundell were known to be around the city quite a bit. With San Francisco's beautiful landscape, healthy food, and lax weed laws, reggae just fell into place with a lot of people of our generation. California is the ganja capital of the world, the Bay Area is the reggae capitol of California — San Francisco is the place to be.

SFBG Have you seen the scene evolve at all?

Irie Dole It has definitely evolved over my short career — there used to be more Caribbean folks here who fed the scene with personal and social interests and raised the demand for events and goods. Without the core Caribbean [being so] massive anymore, and the city cracking down on the nightlife, central venues like Maritime Hall and events like Reggae in the Park have fallen by the wayside. But the reggae community is always there, always younger folks who have been brought up on the One Love mentality, with motivation to make things better.

I-Vier It's good and growing. I'm always surprised by how many people are in tune with Jamaican and reggae dancehall out here. It seems as though every day there's a new person that connects. It's all about the youth, because they are obviously the future. One of my favorite things is to hear friends say that their little brother, sister, and even students borrow/steal one of our mix CDs. It's good to know that positive music is reaching Bay Area youth.

SFBG What do you think of dubstep, which has its roots in reggae and dub music?

Irie Dole Reggae has spawned so many variations that I wasn't shocked when I heard about dubstep — but I was surprised when I heard how unique it is. Someone really stretched the boundaries with that one.

I-Vier Dubstep is a newer subgenre of reggae that is gaining huge momentum. I think of it as wicked hardcore steppers-style infused with house. Definitely influenced by roots reggae, but there's also lots of classic and current dancehall dubstep remixes too.

SFBG Your events are more lively than some expect ...

Irie Dole Our parties are always high energy and positive. We pride ourselves on pleasing the crowd — they come first. People also check us out to hear what's new or what's poppin'. Jah Yzer keeps it nicer, mixing all the classics just right, I-Vier busts the newest tunes, and Irie Dole makes sure the party never stops.

I-Vier What sets us apart from a lot of other reggae and dancehall DJs is our ability to read crowds and mix new with old. You can find us playing all kinds of parties from dub to hardcore dancehall, hip-hop, even salsa.

Jah Yzer We mix with the fire. People know when they come see us, they're gonna dance. **SFBG**

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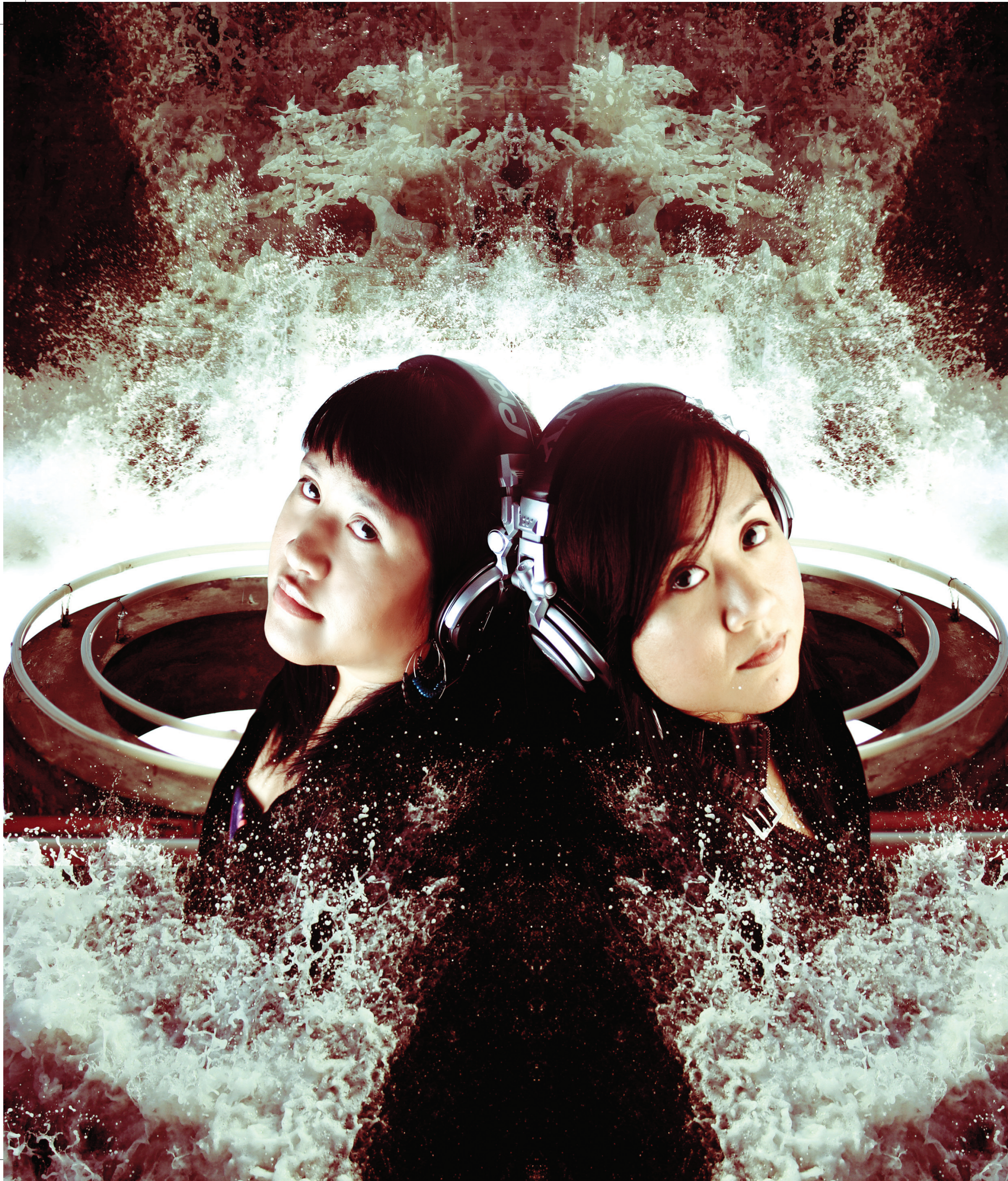
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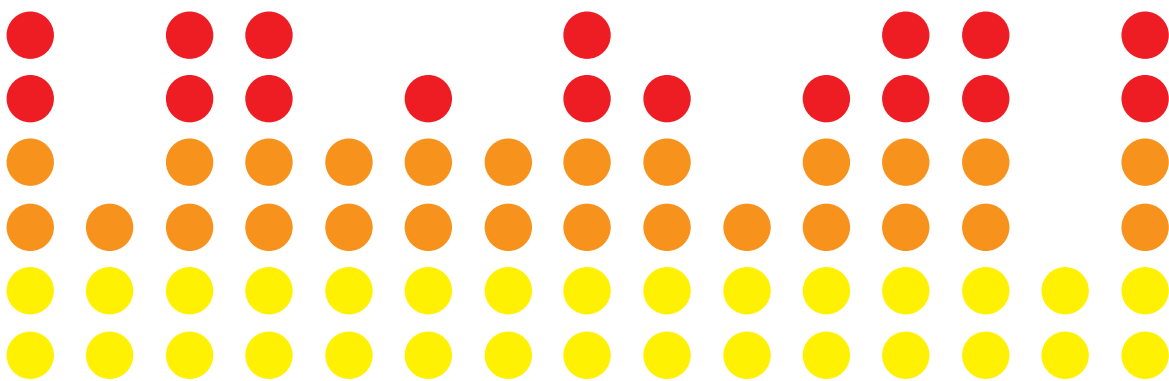
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SUMMER 2009 SCENE 11





DEEANDROID AND CELSKIII PUT THE NEEDLE ON

interview: billy jam
photography: leo herrera

Like so much music and art these days, turntablism is easier to find online than in a public space. A turntablist can easily record their scratch practice session, upload it to YouTube, and sit back and wait for feedback to show up on their screen. But for sheer enjoyment, creative interaction, and advancement of the art form, turntable pyrotechnics really need to be experienced in the live, raw setting of DJ battles or sessions. That's why Bay Area turntablist duo Deeandroid and Celskiii recently decided to revive their hands-on scratch DJ club night, Skratchpad. Bay Area turntable fiends, missing the party's lively conviviality since it shut down earlier in the decade, were getting antsy.

The super-skilled, Vallejo-born female scratch duo who've toured with the likes of KRS-One now tears it up twice monthly at the Cellar in San Francisco. There, DJs from the aspiring to the established (Swift Rock, Shortkut, and Teeko have each turned in memorable sets) join the two and others like Winst-One and Bizibeats to carry on the sacred Bay scratch tradition. Skratchpad boasts two rooms, one with open tables for guest beat-juggling and the other for just plain getting down, and takes mighty inspiration from legendary late-1990s hip-hop joint Beat Lounge, where Deeandroid and Celskiii — and many others on the scene — got their start. Skratchpad even hosts the occasional DJ Q&A session, but all answers must be phrased in the form of turntable pyrotechnics only.

SFBG Why revive Skratchpad now?

Celskiii If we want to keep the music and culture alive, then we have to pass it on. A lot of younger cats didn't grow up during that raw '90s era, but that doesn't mean they can't experience what we were so lucky to have been exposed to.

SFBG How exactly does the open turntable policy work?

Deeandroid You must bring your own needles, headphones, and records, sign up on the list, and wait your turn for the MC host of the night to call the DJ names. We have seven turntables and five mixers usually for

the open turn session. DJs rotate after they do their thing twice or we tell them to switch.

SFBG Is it ever a problem with some DJ hogging the turns?

Deeandroid Yes, there'll always be some who forget their DJ etiquette or need to learn it. (Laughs.) So Skratchpad is a great spot to learn how to jam and interact with others, and in front of a crowd.

CELSKIII Hmmm, maybe we should do something like the Project Blowed sessions where they say "Pass the mic!"

Deeandroid Plus DJs are sometimes drunk and can't keep track of it, which is why we have an MC join us in hosting. So far we've had Bas One, BBoy Profo, and Johnny Krush of Masterplan help out.

SFBG Can people dance to scratching?

CELSKIII I remember the first party, a group of friends came into the scratch room and they were getting hyphy! That was dope to see! But then they left and went to dance in the other room.

Deeandroid People can dance to it. B-boys and B-girls show up and do their thang. It's totally danceable. But the general public really doesn't get to see scratching at all so usually they're just in awe. But as [Skratchpad resident] DJ Bern says, "Cut some rug or cut some wax!"

SFBG Skratchpad is free, so that means it's all for the love, right?

Celskiii Yeah, a lot of us are doing this out of love. We aren't making any money. We're still trying to get enough so we can print flyers from the 10 percent at the bar. (Laughs.) **SFBG**

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STREET THREADS

PHOTOS: ARIEL SOTO

DAY AND NIGHT 18TH AND VALENCIA

NAME:
MARION
OCCUPATION:
GYROTONIC TEACHER
WHAT YOU'RE UP TO:
BEING A TOURIST



NAME:
SUNSHINE
OCCUPATION:
SELLING CHOCOLATE
WHAT YOU'RE UP TO:
VOLUNTEERING AT ATA



NAME:
ALEXIS
OCCUPATION:
PASTRY CHEF/DANCER
WHERE YOU'RE HEADED:
EMPEROR NORTON JAZZ BAND!



NAME:
AMINA
OCCUPATION:
ACTRESS/STUDENT
WHAT YOU'RE WEARING:
BOOTS FROM CROSSROADS



NAME:
JHAARI
OCCUPATION:
ARTIST
WHERE YOU'RE HEADED:
MUSIC SHOW



NAME:
SASHA
WHAT YOU'RE WEARING:
**GLASSES FOUND ON AN LA
STREET CORNER, TOP FROM
THRIFT TOWN, SHOES BY BBC**



PHOTOGRAPHY: DAMIEN MILLER, SAPIENTPHOTO.COM



—CITYSEARCH 053

The logo for Green Sports Bar features the words "Green Sports" in a green, cursive script font, with "Bar" in a larger, bold, green serif font below it. A green leaf-like shape underlines the text. A small green flag with the number "19" is positioned at the top right of the logo.

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PACIFIC SOUND TAKES IT OUTSIDE

INTERVIEW: MARKE B.
PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEX WARNOW

For 15 years, the much-loved and lovable warm-weather Sunset parties have shaken various hills, isles, parks, patios, and boats with funky, techy house sounds. Launched by underground hero DJ Galen in 1994 (has it really been that long?), the outdoor Sunset gigs have amassed a huge following of excited party newbies and familiar old-school faces — and now their kids! Early on in the game, Galen was joined by fellow Bay favorite DJs Solar and J-Bird, and the three — collectively known as Pacific Sound (www.pacificsound.net) — have kept the vibe strong ever since. This year saw a remarkable expansion on the Sunset fan base: attendance at the season opener at Stafford Lake reached almost 4,000, and Pacific Sound just launched an annual — and truly moving — party on Treasure Island that had multiple generations putting their hands in the air. “The vision was to take electronic music out of the dirty warehouses, away from the dodgy promoters, and into the sunshine,” says J-Bird. Summer’s just begun, and Pacific Sound, with several gangbuster parties lined up, keeps delivering.

SFBG *You guys have been a major part of the party scene here for a while. What do you think of it right now?*

Pacific Sound There’s a foundation for creativity in San Francisco — that is something that will never change. Also, there definitely is quite a bit more international talent coming here than 10 years ago. It’s this constant exposure to musical stylings from around the world that will facilitate a thriving scene. The recent crackdowns by the SFPD and ABC may be dampening some spirits, but it will never stop our creative heritage.

SFBG *You mean all the pressure on venues lately ...*

Pacific Sound Yes. In a city that has such a creative past, where so much musical talent has emerged, it’s strange that there’s such a strong force trying stifle it. It’s hard to understand when SF has trouble keeping a handle on violent crimes and nightlife is such a draw for tourists and revenue for the city.

SFBG *You guys are OK, though, right?*

Pacific Sound We used to be more renegade and take

more chances on locations, but we’ve always had a good rapport with the authorities. At this point we get permits for all our events.

SFBG *Do you worry about the scene’s future?*

Pacific Sound There is a ton of potential here. Until recently there was a healthy underground party scene. If things are forced back into the clubs there have to be better venues. We are talking about medium size, 300 to 500 people, clubs with state-of-the-art sound systems. Right now there’s no club that focuses on sound quality, caters to an underground urban crowd, and is geared toward house and techno. Any club that has that now usually caters to the dress-up or bridge-and-tunnel crowd. But San Francisco could easily re-emerge as the pinnacle place in the western hemisphere for dance music labels, artists, and parties — as it once was in the ’90s.

SFBG *Share some favorite Sunset memories.*

Pacific Sound For the first two years we did the party every Sunday in the Berkeley Marina for free. Everyone would run up the hill right before sunset to watch the view, dance, and then scream and run down the hill back to the dance area for more. Our two-year anniversary party was on the spring equinox, right on the water at Point Molate in Richmond. We set up three turntables. At the actual sunset, there was a lunar eclipse on one side of sky, and the Hale-Bop comet on the other side. Magical! **SFBG**

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SPECTRUM FESTIVAL

Arriving on the same weekend as Pride, just to make everyone even more freaky, is this gonzo two-night affair that runs the gamut from ecstatic indie pop to revisionist dancehall. Much-hyped Diplo-Switch project, Major Lazer, headlining Friday night, does its best Jamaican impression with a little weirdo ragga action. Luckily, there are way more fantastic draws. Heavenly breakbeat pioneer LTJ Bukem with MC Conrad, addictive French indie stars Phoenix, fantastic electro risers Boyz Noize, and many, many more — including Antennae, Nikola Baytala, Gooferman, Disco Shawn, and Amazing Baby — to get you off your rocker. June 26-27, 9 p.m., \$27.50-\$70
Regency Ballroom
1300 Van Ness, SF.
www.spectrumfest.com

ENTER THE DANCEHALL

There seems to be a major revival of dancehall on tap this summer — a no-brainer considering all the dub-influenced genres that have been floating for the past three years. And maybe it's time, after all the (lovely) aggression of electro and future bass to lean back, light up, and rock to smoother beats.

This extravaganza at Club Six boasts two rooms of block-rockin' tunes, and a rare appearance by the fierce and feisty dancehall stalwart Sister Nancy, whose awesome "Bam Bam" tune may be the new anthem of the old-school sound. DJs Green B, Smoke 1, Sharp, and others will also deliver. What next? A ska revival? We can only hope.

June 27, 9 p.m., \$8 advance

Club Six

66 Sixth St., SF.

www.clubsix1.com

CREAM OF BEAT

It's a smorgasbord of turntable fireworks, as a slew of the Bay's best hip-hoppable wizards go needle-to-needle at this battle — going strong since 1996 — to see who's best. (Our vote: all of them). Shortcut, Apollo, Fuze, Sake 1, Mind Motion, Supreme, and a bunch more legendary heroes of the turntablist movement bring the noise. You prepare to be scratched, triple-tracked, and stunned. Bonus house and soul battle with longtime faves Dedan and Consuelo.

July 3, 10 p.m., \$15

Mighty

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www.creamofbeat.com

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THE GLITCH MOB

PARTY RADAR CONT>>

DAVID HARNES

Sometime this year, a new wave of club kids glommed onto the sounds of soulful house — the very sounds that our very own, world-renowned David Harness has been purveying for more than a decade here. It's inspiring to see him back in big rooms and at massive outdoor festivals, bringing down the spirits with his silky mixes and straight-up funky tracks. He'll be taking Temple up, just before the July Fourth party madness takes everybody over (and probably out).

July 3, 10 p.m., \$20

Temple

540 Howard, SF

www.templessf.com

KODE9 AND SPACEAPE

As it becomes more popular, dubstep may be moving on to more user-friendly, softer territory. Witness the recent attempted launch of subgenre "purple" which aims, admirably but a bit condescendingly, to bring more women to the dancefloor. But the rough and wiggly sounds of another subgenre, hyperdub, still fascinate the ears of every gender — as long as you can roll long and low, no need for a rumble of the sexes. British DJ, producer, and record label owner Kode9 practically invented the style, and MC Spaceape is the go-to MC when words are needed to describe why your legs are quaking.

July 10, 10 p.m., \$10 advance

103 Harriet, SF.

www.1015.com

THE VERY BEST

The Very Best is one of those magical left-field collaborations that tran-

scends the dance floor and bounces you somewhere else entirely. When French electronic tastemakers Etienne Tron and Johan Karlberg of Radioclit partnered with virtuoso Malawian singer Esau Mwamwaya for a mixtape that stormed the world late last year, all rules were broken. Snatches of tracks that spanned from Michael Jackson to Architecture in Helsinki (with a little Kronos Quartet to boot) were melded into sparkling pop landscapes, while the irrepressible Mwamwaya sings as strongly and brightly as African sunshine. Radioclit isn't afraid to bring the big beats when it warrants, but mostly this will be an event for singing and bopping along to.

July 17, 10 p.m., \$13 advance

Mighty

119 Utah, SF.

www.mighty119.com

GLITCH MOB

Holy sheet, the hallowed saints of future bass are coming to tear up Mezzanine. Now performing as a trio (we miss you, Kraddy!), Boreta, Ooah, and ediT somehow bridge the gap between gangsta rap and Burning Man, wildly throwing down that warped bass and chop-chop vocals. They'll be joined by LA producer and godfather Daddy Kev, who most acknowledge as the progenitor of the sound that's currently everywhere on the underground, as well as local mind-screwers Ana Sia and Eskmo.

July 25, 8:30 p.m., \$22.50 advance

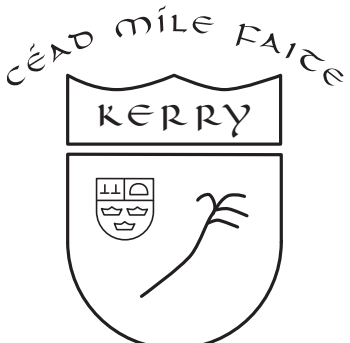
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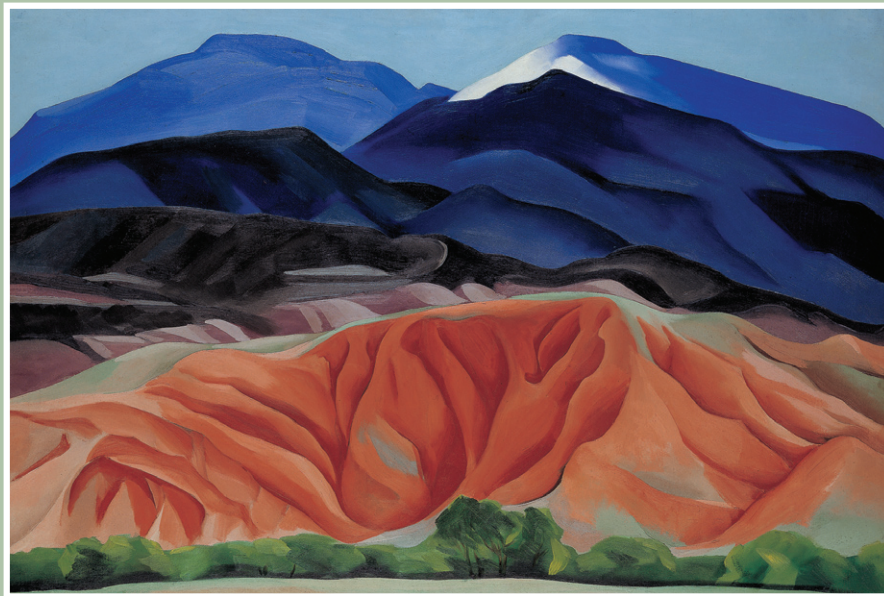
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Images, left to right: Georgia O'Keeffe, *Black Mesa Landscape, New Mexico/Out Back of Marie's II*, 1930; Collection the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, gift of The Burnett Foundation; © 2009 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Ansel Adams, *Winter Sunrise, the Sierra Nevada from Lone Pine, California*, 1944; Collection the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona; © 2009 The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.





Just when it seemed Brazil had maxed out its production of sexy songstresses, along comes CéU. This girl from São Paulo (or Paulistana) seems the antithesis of her polluted, overpopulated hometown: CéU means sky — a rare sight in Brazil's megalopolis — and the songs on *Vagarosa*, her new album coming out on Six Degrees Records, revel in a sensual world of languor. Her debut CD was a cafe staple that garnered Grammy and Latin Grammy noms, yet CéU's artful blend of samba, soul, jazz, and electronica has helped her earn her keep on São Paulo's underground scene. Her music embodies that city's contradictions: it's at once cosmopolitan, gritty, earthy, and languid. A breath of fresh air in the concrete jungle, indeed.

About a decade ago every boutique and lounge had the "new" Brazilian sound on heavy rotation, but what was once new now sounds dated — over-produced and digitally heavy-handed. Bucking that trend, CéU has cultivated an organic sound that combines acoustic elements with breezy, tasteful electronic embellishments. Collaborating with the likes of Curumin and Nação Zumbi, her path has subtly turned toward roots music, paying homage to the past while forging into the future. In that respect, CéU is spearheading a leisurely Brazilian music revolution ... it may not be televised, but you'll gladly sip a caipirinha to it.

SFBG *What was it like growing up in São Paulo?*

CÉU I was born in a neighborhood called Vila Nova Conceição that was founded by a Portuguese community. Back then, it used to be a very calm place, like a little countryside town. Today it's totally different and urban.

SFBG *Brazilians are known for their beautifully mixed ethnic roots, with elements from the Amazon, to Europe, and on to Africa. What's your family's heritage?*

CÉU My family is definitely mixed, but it's hard to say what's what. Mainly Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, native Brazilian, and even American.

SFBG *You spent a year in New York City when you were 18. How did that experience affect what was to come for you musically?*

CÉU It was a very special year, I love New York. It inspired me to write my own music, something I thought impossible until then. It was good to distance myself from Brazil, to feel homesick and write about it.

SFBG *What's it been like for you to perform your music in the U.S.?*

CÉU It's always challenging to convey the feeling of my music without the help of lyrics. But it's all good, sometimes I get a looser audience, sometimes not so much. The crowds are never as noisy as in Brazil, but American audiences are more attentive to artists.

SFBG *How do you translate your new album's title, Vagarosa?*

CÉU "Vagarosa" means slow. Because the world is moving too fast, I felt a little laziness was in order. Maybe if we weren't so needy, we could appreciate the simple things more. Besides, I got pregnant while producing the record, which greatly influenced the process. It's more organic than the first one.

SFBG *Brazilian musicians seem to have a knack for collaboration.*

CÉU Here in São Paulo we collaborate a lot! I play with Curumin, the guys from Nação Zumbi, Instituto, and so forth. There is a great music scene here, which makes me very proud! **SFBG**

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